

Calendar No. 386

103D CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 1226

[Report No. 103-236]

A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the organization and administration of the Readjustment Counseling Service, to improve eligibility for readjustment counseling and related counseling, and for other purposes.

MARCH 15 (legislative day, FEBRUARY 22), 1994
Reported with an amendment

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JULY 14 (legislative day, JUNE 30), 1993

Mr. AKAKA introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

MARCH 15 (legislative day, FEBRUARY 22), 1994

Reported by Mr. ROCKEFELLER, with an amendment

[Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert the part printed in italic]

A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the organization and administration of the Readjustment Counseling Service, to improve eligibility for readjustment counseling and related counseling, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Readjustment Counsel-
3 ing Service Amendments of 1993”.

4 **SEC. 2. ORGANIZATION OF THE READJUSTMENT COUNSEL-**
5 **ING SERVICE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF VET-**
6 **ERANS AFFAIRS.**

7 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 7305 of title 38, United
8 States Code, is amended—

9 (1) by redesignating paragraph (7) as para-
10 graph (8); and

11 (2) by inserting after paragraph (6) the follow-
12 ing new paragraph (7):

13 “(7) A Readjustment Counseling Service.”.

14 (b) ORGANIZATION.—The Readjustment Counseling
15 Service shall have the organizational structure and admin-
16 istrative structure of that service as such structures were
17 in existence on January 1, 1993.

18 (c) REVISION OF ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE.—

19 (1) The Secretary of Veterans Affairs may not alter or
20 revise the organizational structure or the administrative
21 structure of the Readjustment Counseling Service until—

22 (A) the Secretary has submitted to the Commit-
23 tees on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and House
24 of Representatives a report containing a full and
25 complete statement of the proposed alteration or re-
26 vision; and

1 ~~(B)~~ a period of 60 days has elapsed after the
2 date on which the report is received by the commit-
3 tees.

(2) In the computation of the 60-day period under paragraph (1)(B), there shall be excluded any day on which either House of Congress is not in session because of an adjournment of more than 3 calendar days to a day certain.

(d) BUDGET INFORMATION RELATING TO THE SERVICE.—Each budget submitted to the Congress by the President under section 1105 of title 31, United States Code, shall set forth the amount requested in the budget for the operation of the Readjustment Counseling Service in the fiscal year covered by the budget and shall set forth separately the amount requested for administrative oversight of the activities of the service (including the amount requested for funding of the Advisory Committee on Veteran Readjustment Counseling).

19 **SEC. 3. DIRECTOR OF THE READJUSTMENT COUNSELING**
20 **SERVICE.**

~~(a) DIRECTOR.—Section 7306(b) of title 38, United States Code, is amended—~~

(1) by striking out “and” at the end of para-
graph (2);

1 (2) by striking out the period at the end of
2 paragraph (3) and inserting in lieu thereof “; and”;
3 and

4 (3) by adding at the end the following:

5 “(4) one shall be a person who (A)(i) is a quali-
6 fied psychiatrist, (ii) is a qualified psychologist hold-
7 ing a diploma as a doctorate in clinical or counseling
8 psychology from an authority approved by the Amer-
9 ican Psychological Association and has successfully
10 undergone an internship approved by that associa-
11 tion, (iii) is a qualified holder of a master in social
12 work degree, or (iv) is a registered nurse holding a
13 master of science in nursing degree in psychiatric
14 nursing or any other mental-health related degree
15 approved by the Secretary, and (B) has at least 3
16 years of clinical experience and 2 years of adminis-
17 trative experience in the Readjustment Counseling
18 Service or other comparable mental health care
19 counseling service (as determined by the Secretary),
20 who shall be the director of the Readjustment Coun-
21 seling Service.”.

22 (b) ORGANIZATIONAL REQUIREMENT.—The Director
23 of the Readjustment Counseling Service shall report to the
24 Under Secretary for Health through the Associate Deputy
25 Under Secretary for Health for Clinical Programs.

1 **SEC. 4. EXPANSION OF ELIGIBILITY FOR READJUSTMENT**
2 **COUNSELING AND CERTAIN RELATED COUN-**
3 **SELING SERVICES.**

4 (a) READJUSTMENT COUNSELING.—(1) Subsection
5 (c) of section 1712A of title 38, United States Code, is
6 amended to read as follows:

7 “(a) Upon the request of any veteran, the Secretary
8 shall, within the limits of Department facilities, furnish
9 counseling to such veteran to assist such veteran in read-
10 justing to civilian life. Such counseling shall include a gen-
11 eral mental and psychological assessment to ascertain
12 whether such veteran has mental or psychological prob-
13 lems associated with readjustment to civilian life.”.

14 (2) Subsection (c) of such section is repealed.

15 (b) OTHER COUNSELING.—Such section is further
16 amended by inserting after subsection (b) the following
17 new subsection (c):

18 “(c) The Secretary may provide the counseling serv-
19 ices described in section 1701(6)(B)(ii) of this title to the
20 surviving parents, spouse, and children of any member of
21 the Armed Forces who dies while serving on active duty
22 or from a condition (as determined by the Secretary) in-
23 curred in or aggravated by such service.”.

24 (c) AUTHORITY TO CONTRACT FOR COUNSELING
25 SERVICES.—Subsection (c) of such section is amended by
26 striking out “subsections (a) and (b)” each place it ap-

1 pears and inserting in lieu thereof “subsections (a), (b),
2 and (c)”.

3 **SEC. 5. CONFIDENTIALITY OF PATIENT RECORDS IN THE**
4 **READJUSTMENT COUNSELING SERVICE.**

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provi-
6 sion of law, the records of the identity, diagnosis, progno-
7 sis, or treatment of any patient or subject of the Readjust-
8 ment Counseling Service of the Department of Veterans
9 Affairs, or of any patient or subject provided readjustment
10 counseling services under a contract with the Department,
11 may be disclosed only as follows:

12 (1) By written consent of the patient or subject,
13 only for the purpose for which such consent is grant-
14 ed.

15 (2) To medical personnel to the extent nec-
16 essary to meet a bona fide medical emergency.

17 (3) To personnel of the Department other than
18 personnel of the service, if such disclosure is deter-
19 mined by an appropriate member of the service to be
20 necessary to avert an imminent danger to the pa-
21 tient or subject, or to another person.

22 (4) If authorized by an appropriate order of a
23 court of competent jurisdiction granted after appli-
24 cation showing good cause therefor (with such cause
25 to be determined according to the elements set forth

1 in section 7332(b)(2)(D) of title 38, United States
2 Code).

3 ~~(b) FINES.~~—Any person who violates a provision of
4 subsection (a) shall be fined in accordance with sub-
5 sections (f) and (g) of section 7332 of title 38, United
6 States Code.

7 **SEC. 6. ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE READJUSTMENT OF**
8 **VETERANS.**

9 ~~(a) IN GENERAL.~~—(1) Subchapter II of chapter 17
10 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by inserting
11 after section 1712B the following:

12 **“§ 1712C. Advisory Committee on Veteran Readjust-**
13 **ment Counseling**

14 ~~“(a)(1) There is in the Department the Advisory~~
15 ~~Committee on Veteran Readjustment Counseling (herein-~~
16 ~~after in this section referred to as the ‘Committee’).~~

17 ~~“(2) The Committee shall consist of 18 members ap-~~
18 ~~pointed by the Secretary from among veterans—~~

19 ~~“(A) who have demonstrated significant civic or~~
20 ~~professional achievement;~~

21 ~~“(B) at least 12 of whom are veterans of the~~
22 ~~Vietnam era or other period of war; and~~

23 ~~“(C) who have experience with the provision of~~
24 ~~veterans benefits and services by the Department.~~

1 ~~“(3) The Secretary shall seek to ensure that members~~
2 ~~appointed to the Committee include persons from a wide~~
3 ~~variety of geographic areas and ethnic backgrounds, per-~~
4 ~~sons from veterans service organizations, and women.~~

5 ~~“(4) The Secretary shall determine the terms of serv-~~
6 ~~ice and pay and allowances of the members of the Commit-~~
7 ~~tee, except that a term of service may not exceed 2 years.~~
8 ~~The Secretary may reappoint any member for additional~~
9 ~~terms of service.~~

10 ~~“(b)(1) The Secretary shall, on a regular basis, con-~~
11 ~~sult with and seek the advice of the Committee with re-~~
12 ~~spect to the provision by the Department of benefits and~~
13 ~~services to veterans in order to assist veterans in the read-~~
14 ~~justment to civilian life.~~

15 ~~“(2)(A) In providing advice to the Secretary under~~
16 ~~this subsection, the Committee shall—~~

17 ~~“(i) assemble and review information relating to~~
18 ~~the needs of veterans in readjusting to civilian life;~~

19 ~~“(ii) provide information relating to the nature~~
20 ~~and character of psychological problems arising from~~
21 ~~military service;~~

22 ~~“(iii) provide an on-going assessment of the ef-~~
23 ~~fectiveness of the policies, organizational structures,~~
24 ~~and services of the Department in assisting veterans~~
25 ~~in readjusting to civilian life; and~~

1 ~~“(iv) provide on-going advice on the most ap-~~
2 ~~propriate means of responding to the readjustment~~
3 ~~needs of future veterans.~~

4 ~~“(B) In carrying out its duties under subparagraph~~
5 ~~(A), the Committee shall take into special account veter-~~
6 ~~ans of the Vietnam era, and the readjustment needs of~~
7 ~~such veterans.~~

8 ~~“(c)(1) Not later than March 31 of each year, the~~
9 ~~Committee shall submit to the Secretary a report on the~~
10 ~~programs and activities of the Department that relate to~~
11 ~~the readjustment of veterans to civilian life. Each such~~
12 ~~report shall include—~~

13 ~~“(A) an assessment of the needs of veterans~~
14 ~~with respect to readjustment to civilian life;~~

15 ~~“(B) a review of the programs and activities of~~
16 ~~the Department designed to meet such needs; and~~

17 ~~“(C) such recommendations (including rec-~~
18 ~~ommendations for administrative and legislative ac-~~
19 ~~tion) as the Committee considers appropriate.~~

20 ~~“(2) Not later than 90 days after the receipt of each~~
21 ~~report under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall transmit~~
22 ~~to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and~~
23 ~~House of Representatives a copy of the report, together~~
24 ~~with any comments and recommendations concerning the~~
25 ~~report that the Secretary considers appropriate.~~

1 ~~“(3) The Committee may also submit to the Sec-~~
 2 ~~retary such other reports and recommendations as the~~
 3 ~~Committee considers appropriate.~~

4 ~~“(4) The Secretary shall submit with each annual re-~~
 5 ~~port submitted to the Congress pursuant to section 529~~
 6 ~~of this title a summary of all reports and recommendations~~
 7 ~~of the Committee submitted to the Secretary since the pre-~~
 8 ~~vious annual report of the Secretary submitted pursuant~~
 9 ~~to that section.~~

10 ~~“(d)(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), the pro-~~
 11 ~~visions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C.~~
 12 ~~App.) shall apply to the activities of the Committee under~~
 13 ~~this section.~~

14 ~~“(2) Section 14 of such Act shall not apply to the~~
 15 ~~Committee.”.~~

16 ~~(2) The table of sections at the beginning of chapter~~
 17 ~~17 of such title is amended by inserting after the item~~
 18 ~~relating to section 1712B the following:~~

~~“1712C. Advisory Committee on Veteran Readjustment Counseling.”.~~

19 ~~(b) ORIGINAL MEMBERS.—(1) Notwithstanding sub-~~
 20 ~~section (a)(2) of section 1712C(a)(2) of such title (as~~
 21 ~~added by subsection (a)), the members of the Advisory~~
 22 ~~Committee on the Readjustment of Vietnam and Other~~
 23 ~~War Veterans on the date of the enactment of this Act~~
 24 ~~shall be the original members of the advisory committee~~
 25 ~~recognized under such section.~~

1 ~~(2) The original members shall so serve until the Sec-~~
2 ~~retary of Veterans Affairs carries out appointments under~~
3 ~~such subsection (a)(2). The Secretary shall carry out such~~
4 ~~appointments as soon after such date as is practicable.~~
5 ~~The Secretary may make such appointments from among~~
6 ~~such original members.~~

7 **SEC. 7. PLAN FOR EXPANSION OF VIETNAM VETERAN RE-**
8 **SOURCE CENTER PILOT PROGRAM.**

9 ~~(a) REQUIREMENT.—(1) The Secretary of Veterans~~
10 ~~Affairs shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Af-~~
11 ~~fairs of the Senate and House of Representatives a plan~~
12 ~~for the expansion of the Vietnam Veteran Resource Center~~
13 ~~program established pursuant to the amendment made by~~
14 ~~section 105 of the Veterans' Administration Health-Care~~
15 ~~Amendments of 1985 (Public Law 99-166; 99 Stat. 944).~~
16 ~~The plan shall include a schedule for the implementation~~
17 ~~of the program at or through all Department of Veterans~~
18 ~~Affairs readjustment counseling centers.~~

19 ~~(2) The Secretary shall submit the plan not later~~
20 ~~than 4 months after the date of the enactment of this Act.~~

21 ~~(b) DEFINITION.—In this section the term “Depart-~~
22 ~~ment of Veterans Affairs readjustment counseling cen-~~
23 ~~ters” has the same meaning given the term “center” in~~
24 ~~section 1712A(i)(1) of title 38, United States Code.~~

1 **SEC. 8. VETERAN CENTER HEALTH-CARE PILOT PROGRAM.**

2 (a) PROGRAM.—(1) Subchapter II of chapter 17 of
3 title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the
4 end the following:

5 **“§ 1720E. Veteran center health-care pilot program**

6 “(a) The Secretary shall carry out a pilot program
7 for the provision of health-related services to eligible veter-
8 ans at readjustment counseling centers. The Secretary
9 shall carry out the pilot program in accordance with this
10 section.

11 “(b)(1) In carrying out the pilot program, the Sec-
12 retary shall—

13 “(A) identify not less than 12 or more than 15
14 readjustment counseling centers at which to provide
15 health-related services under the pilot program; and

16 “(B) provide such services to eligible veterans
17 at such centers in accordance with paragraph (2).

18 “(2)(A) The Secretary shall provide health-related
19 services under the pilot program as follows:

20 “(i) At 5 or more readjustment counseling cen-
21 ters identified under paragraph (1)(A), by providing
22 not less than 20 hours per week of basic ambulatory
23 services and health-care screening through qualified
24 personnel.

1 ~~“(ii) At 5 or more such centers, by providing~~
2 ~~not less than 40 hours per week of full-range ambu-~~
3 ~~latory services through qualified personnel.~~

4 ~~“(iii) At 2 or more such centers, by providing~~
5 ~~not less than 120 hours per week of physician serv-~~
6 ~~ices through qualified personnel.~~

7 ~~“(B) In determining the location of the readjustment~~
8 ~~counseling centers at which to provide health-related serv-~~
9 ~~ices under the pilot program, the Secretary shall select~~
10 ~~centers that are located in a variety of geographic areas~~
11 ~~and that serve veterans of a variety of economic, social,~~
12 ~~and ethnic backgrounds.~~

13 ~~“(c)(1) The Secretary shall commence the provision~~
14 ~~of health-related services at readjustment counseling cen-~~
15 ~~ters under this section not later than 6 months after the~~
16 ~~date of the enactment of the Readjustment Counseling~~
17 ~~Service Amendments of 1993.~~

18 ~~“(2) The pilot program shall terminate 2 years after~~
19 ~~the date on which the Secretary commences the provision~~
20 ~~of services under paragraph (1).~~

21 ~~“(d) For the purposes of this section—~~

22 ~~“(1) The term ‘Department general health-care~~
23 ~~facility’ has the meaning given such term in section~~
24 ~~1712A(i)(2) of this title.~~

1 ~~“(2) The term ‘eligible veteran’ means any vet-~~
 2 ~~eran eligible for outpatient services under paragraph~~
 3 ~~(1), (2), or (3) of section 1712(a) of this title.~~

4 ~~“(3) The term ‘readjustment counseling center’~~
 5 ~~has the same meaning given the term ‘center’ in sec-~~
 6 ~~tion 1712A(i)(1) of this title.’”.~~

7 ~~(2) The table of sections at the beginning of such~~
 8 ~~chapter is amended by inserting after the item relating~~
 9 ~~to section 1720D the following:~~

~~“1720E. Veteran center health-care pilot program.”.~~

10 ~~(b) REPORT.—(1) The Secretary of Veterans Affairs~~
 11 ~~shall submit to Congress a report on the veteran center~~
 12 ~~health-care pilot program established under section 1720E~~
 13 ~~of title 38, United States Code (as added by subsection~~
 14 ~~(a)). The report shall include the following:~~

15 ~~(A) A description of the program, including in-~~
 16 ~~formation on—~~

17 ~~(i) the number of veterans provided health-~~
 18 ~~related services under the program;~~

19 ~~(ii) the number of such veterans referred~~
 20 ~~to Department of Veterans Affairs general~~
 21 ~~health-care facilities in order to provide health~~
 22 ~~care services to such veterans; and~~

23 ~~(iii) the cost to the Department of the pro-~~
 24 ~~gram.~~

1 ~~(B)~~ An analysis of the effectiveness of the
 2 health-related services provided to veterans under
 3 the program.

4 ~~(C)~~ The recommendations of the Secretary for
 5 means of improving the program, and an estimate of
 6 the cost to the Department of implementing such
 7 recommendations.

8 ~~(D)~~ Such other information as the Secretary
 9 considers appropriate.

10 ~~(2)~~ The Secretary shall submit the report not later
 11 than 3 months after the termination of the pilot program.

12 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

13 *This Act may be cited as the “Readjustment Counsel-*
 14 *ing Service Amendments of 1994”.*

15 **SEC. 2. ORGANIZATION OF THE READJUSTMENT COUNSEL-**
 16 **ING SERVICE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF VET-**
 17 **ERANS AFFAIRS.**

18 (a) *IN GENERAL.*—Section 7305 of title 38, United
 19 States Code, is amended—

20 (1) by redesignating paragraph (7) as para-
 21 graph (8); and

22 (2) by inserting after paragraph (6) the follow-
 23 ing new paragraph (7):

24 “(7) A Readjustment Counseling Service.”.

1 (b) *ORGANIZATION.—The Readjustment Counseling*
2 *Service shall have the organizational structure and admin-*
3 *istrative structure of that service as such structures were*
4 *in existence on January 1, 1993.*

5 (c) *REVISION OF ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE.—(1)*
6 *The Secretary of Veterans Affairs may not alter or revise*
7 *the organizational structure or the administrative structure*
8 *of the Readjustment Counseling Service until—*

9 (A) *the Secretary has submitted to the Commit-*
10 *tees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and House of*
11 *Representatives a report containing a full and com-*
12 *plete statement of the proposed alteration or revision;*
13 *and*

14 (B) *a period of 60 days has elapsed after the*
15 *date on which the report is received by the commit-*
16 *tees.*

17 (2) *In the computation of the 60-day period under*
18 *paragraph (1)(B), there shall be excluded any day on which*
19 *either House of Congress is not in session because of an*
20 *adjournment of more than 3 calendar days to a day certain.*

21 (d) *BUDGET INFORMATION RELATING TO THE SERV-*
22 *ICE.—Each budget submitted to Congress by the President*
23 *under section 1105 of title 31, United States Code, shall*
24 *set forth the amount requested in the budget for the oper-*
25 *ation of the Readjustment Counseling Service in the fiscal*

1 *year covered by the budget and shall set forth separately*
 2 *the amount requested for administrative oversight of the ac-*
 3 *tivities of the service (including the amount requested for*
 4 *funding of the Advisory Committee on Readjustment of Vet-*
 5 *erans).*

6 **SEC. 3. DIRECTOR OF THE READJUSTMENT COUNSELING**
 7 **SERVICE.**

8 *(a) DIRECTOR.—Section 7306(b) of title 38, United*
 9 *States Code, is amended—*

10 *(1) by striking out “and” at the end of para-*
 11 *graph (2);*

12 *(2) by striking out the period at the end of para-*
 13 *graph (3) and inserting in lieu thereof “; and”; and*

14 *(3) by adding at the end the following:*

15 *“(4) one shall be a person who (A)(i) is a quali-*
 16 *fied psychiatrist, (ii) is a qualified psychologist hold-*
 17 *ing a diploma as a doctorate in clinical or counseling*
 18 *psychology from an authority approved by the Amer-*
 19 *ican Psychological Association and has successfully*
 20 *undergone an internship approved by that associa-*
 21 *tion, (iii) is a qualified holder of a master in social*
 22 *work degree, or (iv) is a registered nurse holding a*
 23 *master of science in nursing degree in psychiatric*
 24 *nursing or any other mental-health related degree ap-*
 25 *proved by the Secretary, and (B) has at least 3 years*

1 *of clinical experience and 2 years of administrative*
 2 *experience in the Readjustment Counseling Service or*
 3 *other comparable mental health care counseling serv-*
 4 *ice (as determined by the Secretary), who shall be the*
 5 *director of the Readjustment Counseling Service.”.*

6 **(b) STATUS OF DIRECTOR.**—Section 7306(a)(3) of
 7 *such title is amended by striking out “eight” and inserting*
 8 *in lieu thereof “nine”.*

9 **(c) ORGANIZATIONAL REQUIREMENT.**—*The Director of*
 10 *the Readjustment Counseling Service shall report to the*
 11 *Under Secretary for Health of the Department of Veterans*
 12 *Affairs through the Associate Deputy Under Secretary for*
 13 *Health for Clinical Programs.*

14 **SEC. 4. EXPANSION OF ELIGIBILITY FOR READJUSTMENT**
 15 **COUNSELING AND CERTAIN RELATED COUN-**
 16 **SELING SERVICES.**

17 **(a) READJUSTMENT COUNSELING.**—(1) *Subsection (a)*
 18 *of section 1712A of title 38, United States Code, is amended*
 19 *to read as follows:*

20 “(a)(1)(A) *Upon the request of any veteran referred*
 21 *to in subparagraph (B) of this paragraph, the Secretary*
 22 *shall furnish counseling to the veteran to assist the veteran*
 23 *in readjusting to civilian life.*

24 “(B) *A veteran referred to in subparagraph (A) of this*
 25 *paragraph is any veteran who—*

1 “(i) served on active duty during the Vietnam
2 era; or

3 “(ii) served on active military, naval, or air
4 service in a theater of combat operations (as deter-
5 mined by the Secretary, in consultation with the Sec-
6 retary of Defense) during a period of war or in any
7 other area during a period in which hostilities (as de-
8 fined in subparagraph (D) of this paragraph) oc-
9 curred in such area.

10 “(C) Upon the request of any veteran other than a vet-
11 eran referred to in subparagraph (A) of this paragraph, the
12 Secretary may furnish counseling to the veteran to assist
13 the veteran in readjusting to civilian life.

14 “(D) For the purposes of subparagraph (A) of this
15 paragraph, the term ‘hostilities’ means an armed conflict
16 in which the members of the Armed Forces are subjected
17 to danger comparable to the danger to which members of
18 the Armed Forces have been subjected in combat with enemy
19 armed forces during a period of war, as determined by the
20 Secretary in consultation with the Secretary of Defense.

21 “(2) The counseling referred to in paragraph (1) shall
22 include a general mental and psychological assessment of
23 a covered veteran to ascertain whether such veteran has
24 mental or psychological problems associated with readjust-
25 ment to civilian life.”.

1 (2) *Subsection (c) of such section is repealed.*

2 (b) *OTHER COUNSELING.—Such section is further*
 3 *amended by inserting after subsection (b) the following new*
 4 *subsection (c):*

5 “(c)(1) *The Secretary shall provide the counseling serv-*
 6 *ices described in section 1701(6)(B)(ii) of this title to the*
 7 *surviving parents, spouse, and children of any member of*
 8 *the Armed Forces who is killed during service on active*
 9 *military, naval, or air service in a theater of combat oper-*
 10 *ations (as determined by the Secretary, in consultation with*
 11 *the Secretary of Defense) during a period of war or in any*
 12 *other area during a period in which hostilities (as defined*
 13 *in subsection (a)(1)(D) of this section) occurred in such*
 14 *area.*

15 “(2) *The Secretary may provide the counseling services*
 16 *referred to in paragraph (1) to the surviving parents,*
 17 *spouse, and children of any member of the Armed Forces*
 18 *who dies while serving on active duty or from a condition*
 19 *(as determined by the Secretary) incurred in or aggravated*
 20 *by such service.”.*

21 (c) *AUTHORITY TO CONTRACT FOR COUNSELING SERV-*
 22 *ICES.—Subsection (e) of such section is amended by striking*
 23 *out “subsections (a) and (b)” each place it appears and in-*
 24 *serting in lieu thereof “subsections (a), (b), and (c)”.*

1 **SEC. 5. ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE READJUSTMENT OF**
2 **VETERANS.**

3 (a) *IN GENERAL.*—(1) *Subchapter II of chapter 17 of*
4 *title 38, United States Code, is amended by inserting after*
5 *section 1712B the following:*

6 **“§ 1712C. Advisory Committee on the Readjustment of**
7 **Veterans**

8 “(a)(1) *There is in the Department the Advisory Com-*
9 *mittee on the Readjustment of Veterans (hereafter in this*
10 *section referred to as the ‘Committee’).*

11 “(2) *The Committee shall consist of not more than 18*
12 *members appointed by the Secretary from among veterans*
13 *who—*

14 “(A) *have demonstrated significant civic or pro-*
15 *fessional achievement; and*

16 “(B) *have experience with the provision of veter-*
17 *ans benefits and services by the Department.*

18 “(3) *The Secretary shall seek to ensure that members*
19 *appointed to the Committee include persons from a wide*
20 *variety of geographic areas and ethnic backgrounds, persons*
21 *from veterans service organizations, and women.*

22 “(4) *The Secretary shall determine the terms of service*
23 *and pay and allowances of the members of the Committee,*
24 *except that a term of service may not exceed 2 years. The*
25 *Secretary may reappoint any member for additional terms*
26 *of service.*

1 “(b)(1) *The Secretary shall, on a regular basis, consult*
2 *with and seek the advice of the Committee with respect to*
3 *the provision by the Department of benefits and services to*
4 *veterans in order to assist veterans in the readjustment to*
5 *civilian life.*

6 “(2)(A) *In providing advice to the Secretary under*
7 *this subsection, the Committee shall—*

8 “(i) *assemble and review information relating to*
9 *the needs of veterans in readjusting to civilian life;*

10 “(ii) *provide information relating to the nature*
11 *and character of psychological problems arising from*
12 *service in the Armed Forces;*

13 “(iii) *provide an on-going assessment of the ef-*
14 *fectiveness of the policies, organizational structures,*
15 *and services of the Department in assisting veterans*
16 *in readjusting to civilian life; and*

17 “(iv) *provide on-going advice on the most appro-*
18 *priate means of responding to the readjustment needs*
19 *of veterans in the future.*

20 “(B) *In carrying out its duties under subparagraph*
21 *(A), the Committee shall take into special account veterans*
22 *of the Vietnam era, and the readjustment needs of such*
23 *veterans.*

24 “(c)(1) *Not later than March 31 of each year, the Com-*
25 *mittee shall submit to the Secretary a report on the pro-*

1 *grams and activities of the Department that relate to the*
2 *readjustment of veterans to civilian life. Each such report*
3 *shall include—*

4 “(A) *an assessment of the needs of veterans with*
5 *respect to readjustment to civilian life;*

6 “(B) *a review of the programs and activities of*
7 *the Department designed to meet such needs; and*

8 “(C) *such recommendations (including rec-*
9 *ommendations for administrative and legislative ac-*
10 *tion) as the Committee considers appropriate.*

11 “(2) *Not later than 90 days after the receipt of each*
12 *report under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall transmit*
13 *to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and*
14 *House of Representatives a copy of the report, together with*
15 *any comments and recommendations concerning the report*
16 *that the Secretary considers appropriate.*

17 “(3) *The Committee may also submit to the Secretary*
18 *such other reports and recommendations as the Committee*
19 *considers appropriate.*

20 “(4) *The Secretary shall submit with each annual re-*
21 *port submitted to the Congress pursuant to section 529 of*
22 *this title a summary of all reports and recommendations*
23 *of the Committee submitted to the Secretary since the pre-*
24 *vious annual report of the Secretary submitted pursuant*
25 *to that section.*

1 “(d)(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), the pro-
 2 visions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C.
 3 App.) shall apply to the activities of the Committee under
 4 this section.

5 “(2) Section 14 of such Act shall not apply to the
 6 Committee.”.

7 (2) The table of sections at the beginning of chapter
 8 17 of such title is amended by inserting after the item relat-
 9 ing to section 1712B the following:

 “1712C. Advisory Committee on the Readjustment of Veterans.”.

10 (b) ORIGINAL MEMBERS.—(1) Notwithstanding sub-
 11 section (a)(2) of section 1712C of such title (as added by
 12 subsection (a)), the members of the Advisory Committee on
 13 the Readjustment of Vietnam and Other War Veterans on
 14 the date of the enactment of this Act shall be the original
 15 members of the advisory committee recognized under such
 16 section.

17 (2) The original members shall so serve until the Sec-
 18 retary of Veterans Affairs carries out appointments under
 19 such subsection (a)(2). The Secretary shall carry out such
 20 appointments as soon after such date as is practicable. The
 21 Secretary may make such appointments from among such
 22 original members.

1 **SEC. 6. PLAN FOR EXPANSION OF VIETNAM VETERAN RE-**
2 **SOURCE CENTER PILOT PROGRAM.**

3 (a) *REQUIREMENT.*—(1) *The Secretary of Veterans Af-*
4 *fairs shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs*
5 *of the Senate and House of Representatives a plan for the*
6 *expansion of the Vietnam Veteran Resource Center program*
7 *established pursuant to the amendment made by section 105*
8 *of the Veterans' Administration Health-Care Amendments*
9 *of 1985 (Public Law 99–166; 99 Stat. 944). The plan shall*
10 *include a schedule for, and an assessment of the cost of,*
11 *the implementation of the program at or through all De-*
12 *partment of Veterans Affairs readjustment counseling cen-*
13 *ters.*

14 (2) *The Secretary shall submit the plan not later than*
15 *4 months after the date of the enactment of this Act.*

16 (b) *DEFINITION.*—*In this section, the term “Depart-*
17 *ment of Veterans Affairs readjustment counseling centers”*
18 *has the same meaning given the term “center” in section*
19 *1712A(i)(1) of title 38, United States Code.*

20 **SEC. 7. REPORT ON COLLOCATION OF VET CENTERS AND**
21 **DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS OUT-**
22 **PATIENT CLINICS.**

23 (a) *REQUIREMENT.*—(1) *The Secretary of Veterans Af-*
24 *fairs shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs*
25 *of the Senate and House of Representatives a report on the*
26 *feasibility and desirability of the collocation of Vet Centers*

1 *and outpatient clinics (including rural mobile clinics) of*
2 *the Department of Veterans Affairs as current leases for*
3 *such centers and clinics expire.*

4 *(2) The Secretary shall submit the report not later*
5 *than 6 months after the date of the enactment of this Act.*

6 *(b) COVERED MATTERS.—The report under this sec-*
7 *tion shall include an assessment of the following:*

8 *(1) The results of any collocation of Vet Centers*
9 *and outpatient clinics carried out by the Secretary*
10 *before the date of the enactment of this Act, including*
11 *the effects of such collocation on the quality of care*
12 *provided at such centers and clinics.*

13 *(2) The effect of such collocation on the capacity*
14 *of such centers to carry out their primary mission.*

15 *(3) The extent to which such collocation will im-*
16 *pair the operational independence or administrative*
17 *integrity of such centers.*

18 *(4) The feasibility of combining the services pro-*
19 *vided by such centers and clinics in the course of the*
20 *collocation of such centers and clinics.*

21 *(5) The advisability of the collocation of centers*
22 *and clinics of significantly different size.*

23 *(6) The effect of the locations (including urban*
24 *and rural locations) of the centers and clinics on the*
25 *feasibility and desirability of such collocation.*

1 (7) *The amount of any costs savings to be*
2 *achieved by Department as a result of such colloca-*
3 *tion.*

4 (8) *The desirability of such collocation in light*
5 *of plans for the provision of health care services by*
6 *the Department under national health care reform.*

7 (9) *Any other matters that the Secretary deter-*
8 *mines appropriate.*

9 **SEC. 8. VET CENTER HEALTH CARE PILOT PROGRAM.**

10 (a) *IN GENERAL.*—*The Secretary of Veterans Affairs*
11 *shall carry out a pilot program for the provision of health-*
12 *related services to eligible veterans at readjustment counsel-*
13 *ing centers. The Secretary shall carry out the pilot program*
14 *in accordance with this section.*

15 (b) *SERVICES.*—(1) *In carrying out the pilot program,*
16 *the Secretary shall provide the services referred to in para-*
17 *graph (2) at not less than 10 readjustment counseling cen-*
18 *ters in existence on the date of the enactment of this Act.*

19 (2) *The Secretary shall provide basic ambulatory serv-*
20 *ices and health care screening services by such personnel*
21 *as the Secretary considers appropriate at each readjustment*
22 *counseling center under the pilot program. The Secretary*
23 *shall assign not less than one-half of a full-time employee*
24 *equivalent at each such center in order to provide such serv-*
25 *ices under the pilot program.*

1 (3) *In determining the location of the readjustment*
2 *counseling centers at which to provide services under the*
3 *pilot program, the Secretary shall select centers that are*
4 *located in a variety of geographic areas and that serve vet-*
5 *erans of a variety of economic, social, and ethnic back-*
6 *grounds.*

7 (c) *PERIOD OF OPERATION.—(1) The Secretary shall*
8 *commence the provision of health-related services at read-*
9 *justment counseling centers under the pilot program not*
10 *later than 4 months after the date of the enactment of this*
11 *Act.*

12 (2) *The pilot program shall terminate 2 years after*
13 *the date on which the Secretary commences the provision*
14 *of services under paragraph (1).*

15 (d) *REPORT.—(1) The Secretary shall submit to Con-*
16 *gress a report on the pilot program established under this*
17 *section. The report shall include the following:*

18 (A) *A description of the program, including in-*
19 *formation on—*

20 (i) *the number of veterans provided basic*
21 *ambulatory services and health care screening*
22 *services under the pilot program;*

23 (ii) *the number of such veterans referred to*
24 *Department of Veterans Affairs general health-*

1 *care facilities in order to provide such services to*
2 *such veterans; and*

3 *(iii) the cost to the Department of Veterans*
4 *Affairs of the pilot program.*

5 *(B) An analysis of the effectiveness of the services*
6 *provided to veterans under the pilot program.*

7 *(C) The recommendations of the Secretary for*
8 *means of improving the pilot program, and an esti-*
9 *mate of the cost to the Department of implementing*
10 *such recommendations.*

11 *(D) An assessment of the desirability of expand-*
12 *ing the type or nature of services provided under the*
13 *pilot program in light of plans for the provision of*
14 *health care services by the Department under national*
15 *health care reform.*

16 *(E) An assessment of the extent to which the pro-*
17 *vision of services under the pilot program impairs the*
18 *operational or administrative independence of the re-*
19 *adjustment counseling centers at which such services*
20 *are provided.*

21 *(F) An assessment of the effect of the location of*
22 *the centers on the effectiveness for the Department and*
23 *for veterans of the services provided under the pilot*
24 *program.*

1 (G) *Such other information as the Secretary con-*
2 *siders appropriate.*

3 (2) *The Secretary shall submit the report not later*
4 *than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act.*

5 (e) *DEFINITIONS.—For the purposes of this section:*

6 (1) *The term “Department of Veterans Affairs*
7 *general health-care facility” has the meaning given*
8 *such term in section 1712A(i)(2) of title 38, United*
9 *States Code.*

10 (2) *The term “eligible veteran” means any vet-*
11 *eran eligible for outpatient services under paragraph*
12 *(1), (2), or (3) of section 1712(a) of such title.*

13 (3) *The term “readjustment counseling center”*
14 *has the same meaning given the term “center” in sec-*
15 *tion 1712A(i)(1) of such title.*

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